

VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE

Journal

Summer 2012

FREE



QUEENSLAND



The Official Journal of the

**Volunteer Marine Rescue
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VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE ASSOCIATION QUEENSLAND INC.

GPO BOX 1425, BRISBANE QLD 4001
PHONE (07) 3247 8879 FAX (07) 3247 8875
Email: harry.hubner@dcs.qld.gov.au

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John Jacobsen.

Construct or it will destruct

As you can see by the heading of my report Construct or It Will Destruct, the association, in my opinion, cannot continue in its present form. A year ago I published a report of Needs verses Wants and have been suggesting ways that we can provide governance and support to our 24 squadrons now and into the future sustainably.

The way of doing this was to look at the wants and needs of our current squadrons and the association, look at the future needs of our industry, both financial and human resources. This includes AVCG, a business plan and strategic plan.

Simple you ask. Well let me tell you it has been impossible to get the information I have been asking for. We are no further advanced today than we were six years ago.

A business plan is absolutely essential to give confidence to our members and potential sponsors, let alone our current management that have to make day to day decisions and a strategic plan that government has been requesting. Added to this, a succession plan for our key employees along with a review of the role of the council. These are all vital for the sustainability of Volunteer Marine Rescue in Queensland.

As you may have been aware I have been promoting that our 24 squadrons adopt the generic Constitution from the Office of Fair Trading, linking the squadrons to the association by way of the Service Agreement, Subsidy Guidelines and the Accreditation Guidelines. This has been met with mixed confusion and interpretation and even the council was not in

agreement. This was one step on the path towards the future. I have an advantage, I talk to the squadrons and if it is the belief that the future is paved with gold and all our squadrons will survive financially then you live in a fools' paradise. Without increasing funding to the squadrons and to the association the sustainability of our service comes into question. The squadrons in the southern areas of Queensland have population and good amount of support both financial and human resource, but the further north we go, in less populated areas, both funding and human resourcing is and will continue to be of concern to the Management of VMRAQ. It is our responsibility to provide a safety net all around the coastline of Queensland but without increasing our funding to provide training and resources to our wonderful volunteers both VMR and AVCG will struggle into the future. This is of the highest priority for VMRAQ.

For VMR to move to the future with the current restraints and attitude, it will take each and every one of us to take responsibility and think outside of the square and become proactive.

One of the highlights of my time as president has been training. To see training advance so sustainably in the past few years has been amazing. This has happened not by accident but under the careful guidance from Robert Brock. My sincere thanks and respect goes out to Robert for his ongoing vision and dedication to his role as the state training officer.



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Secretary Manager Harry Hubner and wife Pam after receiving the Lloyds List Australian Shipping & Maritime Industry Award.



On Thursday, November 24 I had the privilege of accompanying Harry and Pam Hubner to Melbourne, where Harry received a Life Time Achievement Award presented to him at the 16th Annual Lloyd's list DCN Australian Shipping and Maritime Industry Awards Night, this spectacular night gave us the opportunity to raise the profile of Volunteer Marine Rescue in Queensland and network with some of the most prestigious members of the Maritime Industry, Harry accepted this award on behalf of all the volunteers that give of their time in protecting our Seafarers this award was

sponsored by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority.

It is a privilege and an honour to be your president and I look forward to your feedback.

By the time you read this article Christmas may be only a memory. However on behalf of your state association we wish you, your families and all the boating public in Queensland a Happy and Safe Christmas and may the New Year be all you wish it to be.

It is imperative that all boaties should and must log on to their closest Volunteer Marine Rescue Squadron or Australian Volunteer Coast Guard. The safety of the boating public is the reason why we are there and by logging on and giving us your details you can be contacted. Please pass this on to your family and friends and if you are camping or extending your stay on our wonderful waterways advise and update the VMR units. All marine rescue organisations can give you updated weather forecasts and boating conditions.

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from the Vice President's Chair



Tony Hawkins.

As I write this Vice President's report Christmas is fast approaching. Where has the year gone, it seems only last week was New Years. Our organisation is in need of some changes, many of these have been referred to by our president, and another that we

have been told about is the pending changes that could affect the charitable status of some of our squadrons. This along with the ever increasing need for more funds to continue to operate that has not diminished. Also, some of our squadrons are in need of new vessels or require their existing vessel to be refitted. Maintenance is a key issue to prevention as one in particular is so bad it is in urgent need of replacement to continue to operate.

Recently I attended VMR Brisbane and VMR Raby Bay where many dedicated volunteers received a Queensland Flood and Cyclone Citation, these were provided for the enormous effort these members contributed to the floods in and around South East Queensland earlier this year. To the presidents and Management of each organisation thank you for the invitation to attend on behalf of the association and thank you to all the members for continuing your services to the community.

Several of our squadrons VMR Burdekin and VMR Raby Bay have new vessels that are due to be launched hopefully before Christmas. I am sure the members of both squadrons are eagerly awaiting the arrival of their new pride and joy. Both of these vessels have some significant changes to what has been standard in the past for VMR, these additional items have been funded by the particular squadrons as each have decided that they require these additional items to suit their particular needs and environment.

Both of these vessels have been fitted with diesel generators to operate on-board equipment, charging of batteries and air conditioning, Some may say that air conditioning is an extravagance but for each particular location they have different requirements. VMR Burdekin can have up to six to eight hours waiting for tidal access to get back into the creek that they launched from with insect infested waterways and mangroves.

VMR Raby Bay's new vessel will be a primary rescue vessel as well as a backup to their secondary vessel. Whilst their secondary vessel was offline during a refit of the vessel last year and then the subsequent whale strike that caused significant damage it highlighted the need for another vessel that is capable of providing back up as a Medivac vessel for North Stradbroke Island. Management from VMR Raby Bay decided it was time to upgrade their primary vessel and to ensure the new vessel would be capable to preform Medivac's, Community assistance activations and the numerous police activated SARs it performs in and around Moreton Bay along

with equipping the vessel with the latest available electronic package and search and rescue equipment available.

I would like to thank all of our volunteer members and their families for the time you spend in supporting the local community and doing training within our organisation.

I wish all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Tony Hawkins
Vice President

from the Training Officer

Well it's that time again, Christmas and has it come around quick, too quick for me. I don't think there is enough time in the day.

As for the year gone by we have put in quite a bit of training and workshops, this year has seen UTC's workshops Cert 4, First Aid, MROCP and in house training with the last major workshops being the UTC workshops held at Brisbane and Mackay, which we had members attending from all over the state, and I would like to thank them for their time and effort.

This was a great time for us, not only for the workshops but also for the interaction of the members from the other squadrons to meet each other and discuss the differences within their own squadrons.

I would like to thank all who were involved for the warm welcome they got, also the time and effort Brisbane and Mackay members took to supply the guys with lunch and morning/afternoon teas which was outstanding.

Just a few statistics for you to look over, from January to November this year we have had **4384 activations** using **177666 litres of fuel** state wide, **trained and qualified 24 VMR Commercial Coxswains**, **61 VMR Coxswains**, **121 competent crew**, **204 members** for ESS.

This I believe is a just a small overview of what and how well we are doing our rescue work so everyone, great job and well done.

We will be having some more TAE & OH&S Courses in the New Year so keep an eye out for them with marine training going on as per usual every week.

At this point I would like to thank all members for their input into training and wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year.

Thanking you all for a great year
Rob



gladstoneVMR

Well there you go if anyone in Australia had any doubts where Gladstone is they should have those doubts removed in the *Four Corners* report on November 3. To go into any great detail of the cause is beyond VMRG except we have had dredging before and with the massive rains in Queensland in early 2011 an estimated 30,000 barramundi were dumped into the estuary from the Awoonga Dam. One of the local scribes who writes a fishing column in the local paper said "everyone has an opinion but the innuendo has not been good for the region".

I'll leave it there for now.

Since our last report we have taken possession of our boat shed built for us by the continuing generosity of the Gladstone Ports Corporation. We have had to do some customising for our needs. A security system has been installed, sign of the times unfortunately. We have also finished installing security cameras and a server to look over the boat ramp and parking area. This would be the first boat ramp in Gladstone monitored by cameras courtesy of a generous donation by PB Sea Tow. Orica Ltd has been generous with a donation for tools for the building. By the time this goes into print we will have a Broadband connection to view the cameras remotely.

We expect our new boat to arrive at the end of the month but more about that in the next issue.



DW Wrembeck at speed in the Brisbane river.

We have been advised by Gladstone Ports Corporation that they want to accelerate construction of our new headquarters to the first half of 2012 so it is all stops out to make sure we finish it to the best of our ability and funds. It's a bit like building a

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house – you don't get it right first time round but we are certainly trying. This will be a very expensive exercise as GPC will only be providing the building it is up to us to furnish it.

I had the pleasure of being shown over the Gladstone Water Police's new vessel the *DW Wrembeck* named after Police Officer Douglas William Wrembeck who at the age of 26 was killed on duty in Brisbane on August 15, 1962.

The vessel is a 10m Naiad rigid inflatable fitted with three 300hp Suzuki outboards. On inquiring with Sergeant Jeff Barnett from the local water police as to weather the 45kts quoted was correct he replied with a smile "a bit better than

DW Wrembeck with the *GJ Olive* over the stern. (top)

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that" so its top speed is a mystery but it sure looks like it can move. The new boat is one of a pair, the sistership is the *GJ Olive*, their first operational duty was to escort the Queen when she was in Brisbane recently.

The outboards are driven by wire with the middle engine being linked to the port motor. For manoeuvring there is a button on the control that brings the mid engine back to idle. The instrumentation is mainly Garmin but with some Furuno sensors. The magic of using NMEA 2000 compliant instruments.

By the time you read this VMRG will be 40 years old with the first meeting being held in The Queens Hotel on December 21, 1971.

Until next time.



Michael Fleetwood of Jones Communications installing the Axis security cameras.

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a crazy day in Karumba

It was going to be one of those days, after all it has been one of those years. My wife's sleep rhythm said "Friday is cancelled due to lack of interest" and the cat looked at his breakfast then looked at me with that, "For me, surely you jest?" look, as though I had served up a portion of unspeakable rodent. It actually looked better than my breakfast but he stalked off in the superior manner that cats and wives have when you have failed yet again to please them. Even the air felt heavy, probably with portents as pressure built for a really torrid weekend of work and hassle.

In the last VMR (Volunteer Marine Rescue) journal, VMR Weipa made light reference to dropping into Karumba with engine trouble and a casual "take it from there" aside on their way to the weekend Sarex (Search and Rescue Exercise) at Sweers Island as though it were a minor inconvenience. (For them I guess it was). Well I am going to tell you the other side of the story and you can be the judge of how Peter Graham got the nick name 'Crazy' and how well that thorny crown sits atop his fair brow.

We, VMR Karumba, had to decline the opportunity to go to the Sweers Island Sarex weekend because we were all snowed under with work, (always are at this time of year). I work for Maritime Safety Qld among other things and our annual dredging programme was getting underway. Our ramp and pontoon, built to accommodate one vessel was about to play host to four vessels as well as be used by Police, Fishing and Boating Patrol and Ports North. It was already mission impossible with two vessels supporting the dredge programme daily and our pilot boat playing musical chairs with the rescue boat.

Of course the boss was away ensuring his alibi for the pending mayhem and nicely fulfilling the formative training for a future in politics. Not going to Sweers Island Sarex also meant a chance to get some service work done on our rescue vessel *Redemption*.

My wife, who is disabled, was off on her electric scooter around the town and things were just starting to line up with the pending arrival of the hydrographic vessel and the dredge tender vessel jockeying for position with our pilot boat which was awaiting the arrival of a live cattle ship at some ungodly hour.

Ring! Ring! "Hullo is that you Bruce? Crazy here, having a spot of bother with our engines, rough night, about had enough, on one motor and the other one could conk out any moment and we are getting low on fuel because the pump is broken and we can't pump up any more fuel, sob, sniffle". "Tell someone who cares" I wanted to scream at him but of course you can't do that to crazy people, so I ask instead with a voice filled with concern if he wanted our help.

You can always tell when a strong man doesn't want to give in but knows he has to. It goes like this. "Nah we're right

we don't need help, we'll just limp in on one motor if it holds up I just thought it might make a good training exercise if you weren't doing anything important."

Sounds great doesn't it? It sort of hints that you are missing out on all the fun as though after 30 years at sea I just can't wait to get back out there and get in a bit of training. It also supposes after so many years as a tug master I've forgotten the finer points of towing a recalcitrant little Shark cat to safe haven. It also supposes that we are really not too busy to come out and play boats and practice towing.

I ask Rob to put the boat back together and dash home to arrange lunch for the missus and tell her I have to go out to help a crazy man at sea. There are two people in the yard when I get home. They are interested in buying our property. They are the first in months since the economy has been teetering on the brink of the economic abyss, but I don't have time for them and I can't find the missus. "Why are you selling," they ask. "Because my missus keeps bogging her scooter out in the back tracks and I can never find her," I say, desperation creeping into my voice. They edge back towards their car. "We'll come back later" they suggest. "Yes, please do" I yell as I fly over the fence to instruct my neighbour to feed my wife when she shows up or organise a search party if she doesn't and then bolt back to work to launch the rescue boat.

I should explain here that electric scooters for the disabled are really just little shopping trolleys with self motivated wheels that happily excel on flat hard even surfaces. My wife's delight at getting one has been marred by the fact that it is not the ex military all terrain amphibious go anywhere fence buster she thought it was but she is still determined to test the limits of its performance credentials.

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Search and Rescue effort off Karumba unsuccessful

A foreign National aboard the ore carrier *Shark Island* loading ore from the transfer ship *Wunma* offshore from the port of Karumba, believed to have fallen overboard sometime on the evening of Monday, November 3 has not been found despite a massive search effort by MRCC and AUSAR supported by local VMR (volunteer marine rescue) units from Karumba and Burketown.

The 54-year-old man from the Philippines was believed to have fallen overboard while fishing sometime Monday evening but was not missed until the following day and a subsequent search of the ship failed to locate him. The unfortunate delay in reporting his disappearance and the realisation he may have fallen overboard in rough conditions so far offshore left little hope of finding him alive.

Despite the delay and lack of hope a large search effort was mounted on Wednesday, October 5 which continued on to Friday night but failed to find any trace of the body. A police investigation on board the ship resulted in reasonable certainty that he had fallen overboard and that no suspicious circumstances were evident.

I would like to personally thank the VMR crews of Karumba and Burketown, and the local pilots of Karumba who despite little hope of finding the man alive, continued to support to the very end the procedural search effort of paid professionals, at the sacrifice of their own work, income and time.

The President
VMR – Karumba

Hope of finding a crew is gone as the whole world seems busy today (except crazy people) so it's me the 'Alone Ranger' and my trusty mate 'Tonto' (Geoff Moore) to the rescue. Rob's got the boat back together and holds up a snake skin he found among the wiring. What that's doing on the boat is any one's guess but we are finally off to find Crazy 25 miles away up the coast somewhere. I turn to 'Tonto' and say, "It looks like we are surrounded by Indians again 'Tonto'. "What do you mean, 'WE' white man," he replies. Geoff is never stuck for a come back.

We find them and the weary seafarers look tired and drawn and they have obviously 'eaten' all their light refreshments and my sympathy rises at their plight and the risk of them missing their fun filled weekend so we hook them up and proceed back to port. Now dear reader if any one wants to construe being towed as being escorted, (as in the last VMR journal) feel free, after all pride can produce all sorts of illusions and what is truth but that which we choose to see.

As we approach the river mouth leading into port Crazy is on the radio. "Okay that's far enough thanks we can drive in from here. We know he doesn't want to be seen being towed so I call him back and explain that we have to take him a bit further in because we sold the story to Channel seven news and they want to get a photo shoot from the beach at the river mouth. The answer was unintelligible and we are having a good laugh when my mobile phone rings. I'm thinking its Crazy having filled his microphone with foam and spittle he is trying the mobile.

A strange mans voice says, "We have your wife." "Say what?" I look back at the Weipa boat under tow and Crazy is advancing up towards the bow with the same expression you get with a cutlass clenched in your teeth. Quick! Get the power off, if he cuts the rope the bungee effect will put us up on the highway amongst the traffic. I turn back to reach for the throttles and there is a snake in a shiny new skin wrapped around the helm and guarding the throttles.

For a moment every thing just sort of stops, freezes, goes blank. Have I stepped through a time warp and ended up in a B grade movie, what the hell is happening?

Years of making decisions when my wife isn't around comes to my aid. The brain unfreezes and says prioritise and execute so I look for the 'Minties.' Of course there's none, never is when you need them.

Holding the helm by the stretchiest tinsy tips of my fingers on the outer rim of the wheel I give the snake my best 'Crocodile Dundee' stare while I ask the stranger on the phone if he wants ransom or compensation for the missus and consider the merits of grabbing the snake by the tail before he hypnotises me.

"No, no," the man says, my wife and I found her out the back of the cemetery calling for help. A brief scrap of film goes through my mind. Two



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timid tourists in a strange lonely cemetery hearing faint calls for help, Jeez! I'd be running. "Could you take her home please, I'll give you directions." "No need", he says, "we know where you live. We are the couple who came to see your property". The snake read my mind and bolted back behind the dashboard down among the wiring and a glance back at Crazy didn't find him walking the tow rope to cut my throat but simply waiting pointedly for me to back off the power so he could release the tow. I bowed my head to the portents of the day and throttled down.

You would think that was the end of the story wouldn't you? They left their boat with me to add to the fleet amassing at the pontoon while flying off into the sunset to frolic on Sweers Island for the weekend but as I watched their plane depart with the same sense of relief you get when the dentist says he was only joking about having to pull all your teeth out, the air still seemed heavy.

On Monday, after returning to Weipa studiously bypassing Karumba and leaving me to play shift the broken down boat every hour on the hour, 'Crazy' rang me with the good news that they had decided to have the Shark cat completely refurbished in Cairns. After foolishly asking how he was going to get it there (walked into that one, didn't I), he mused about

how I should be able to take care of that little detail for them as they were all pretty exhausted from their big weekend away. If those southern boys found their weekend very character building, they should have tried mine.

What the hell! Just find a big crane and some slinky things to suit a 10 tonne Shark cat, lift it out at some ones wharf that can take a 75 tonne crane, chuck it on a truck and get it delivered 850kms across the desert and over the Great Dividing Range and drop it off in Cairns. What's hard about that for some one with nothing to do and all day to do it in.

"Sure thing 'Crazy', I'll just take a shorter lunch break tomorrow and take care of it for you, don't you go wearing yourself out, after all you have a holiday coming up in Asia shortly and you don't want to arrive there all stressed."

I didn't want to tell every one that 'Crazy' had to get towed but I know I'll never get the very large barrel of 'Jack Daniels' he owes me so bugger it! And the next time you want a SAREX exercise just have a 'Crazy' one like I did. He's the biggest challenge you will ever take on.

Bruce Hansford
President
VMR Karumba

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In this issue we outline highlights of activations, revisit some of the ongoing impacts of the summer 2010-11 floods in the Burnett River and a visit to our sister organisation in South Africa.

ACTIVATIONS

Planning to minimise risk at sea

The above title might seem more appropriate for a session in a course for mariners than the VMRAQ journal, but it is the main conclusion derived from two of our activations during the quarter.

The first involved a 13m yacht which called for assistance (on a mobile phone) from just outside the Burnett River channel. The vessel had no engine power or electrics and wanted a tow to port to effect repairs. The crew of *Bundy Rescue* accomplished the tow. I was on radio shift a couple of days later and was surprised to see a mid-morning tow of the same yacht to sea by a local motor vessel. The towing skipper requested a log-on for the 'towed yacht' for a nine hour journey to Gladstone. It was subsequently revealed that the 'towed yacht' still did not have electrics including radio, or an operational engine and it took almost an hour to get the sails up and the vessel underway. Thus issues of crew experience and vessel sea-worthiness come to mind – hence the issue of

planning. How did they plan to negotiate the Gladstone traffic area in the dark, with no electrics or engine? You guessed it – our colleagues in Gladstone did the honours during the afternoon of the next day.

The next one involved a late afternoon call on October 31 from a 15m yacht with a disabled engine about 7.5nm north of the Burnett channel. A strong wind warning was current and *Bundy Rescue*, with Bill Ker as skipper, rendezvoused with the yacht just after twilight in moderate to rough seas. The yacht did not have a Samson post or above deck anchor bollard so we could only rely on the tow attached to forward cleats. As Bill was uncertain about the strength this arrangement for a tow in the prevailing conditions he opted for a 'kid gloves tow' at 3.5kts. As the yacht had a 2m draft a direct 7.5nm tow was not an option across the shallows to the north of the channel, so the return blew out to 14nm and four hours. Why were they out there in such conditions? The story – "We had to wait for the tide to get out of Pancake Creek, otherwise we would have been in the river before the wind got up". Sorry, the strong wind warning had been out for at least two days before the event, so what is another 24 hours in a sheltered anchorage? The other issue that comes to mind is why a beautifully fitted out Bavaria yacht could not have sailed into the channel and dropped anchor, even in strong winds?

The above incidents were in addition to seven rescue activations and AGL Action Rescue helicopter training and

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routine training during the quarter. The stats for the quarter are shown below.

Incident	Litres fuel	Hours	nm	Persons returned
Activations	841	40	200	12
Training	371	30	98	-



The following sea behind *Bundy Rescue* going to the 15m yacht activation on October 31.

all be replaced with buoys so they can be relocated, rather than lost, in future floods.

The flood also resulted in deposition of sand with major shallowing in the Millaquin/Rocky Reaches and in the swing basin at the port and the seawards channel. Contractors for the Bundaberg Port Authority have dredged 340,000 cubic metres of sand from the swing basin (see photo) and the dredge Brisbane removed a further 200,000 cubic metres from the shipping channel.

Barge BAP2 driving a 25m long lateral mark near the Port Bundaberg Marina. (right)

The sand heap dredged from the Port Bundaberg swing basin – for size perspective note the excavator just to the right of centre in the picture. (below) photo courtesy Peter Steele, Bundaberg Port Authority



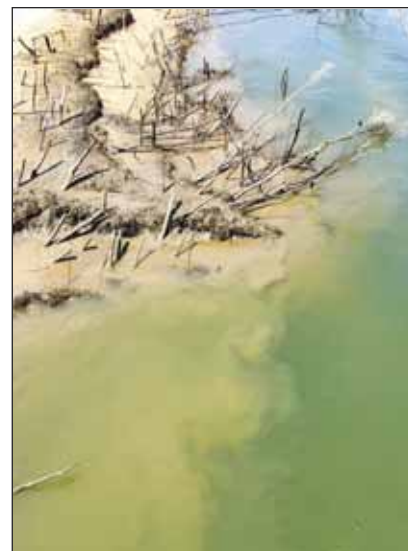
AFTER THE BURNETT RIVER FLOODS

Navigation marks and dredging

We provided details in the Autumn 2011 journal of some of the chaos that ensued from the major flood event in the Burnett River last summer. There was also major damage to MSQ navigation structures in the river, with loss of, or damage to six pile lateral marks between the river mouth and Port Bundaberg, two posts on Kirby's Wall in the Millaquin reach and damage to all structures upstream of the port. MSQ are well on the way to replacement/repair of these structures at a cost of \$2.2 million. The downstream 25m long piles have been driven 13m into the river bed (see photo above right) and upstream structures will

Mangroves

There was significant death of small diameter re-growth mangroves in the town reach after the flood. The long duration of the fresh water flood (more than 14 days) and sand-blasting of the bark has been implicated in this outcome. The death and subsequent removal of young mangroves is resulting in some bank erosion and increased water turbidity.



Dead mangroves after flooding in the town reach of the Burnett River. (far left)

Increased bank erosion and water turbidity after death of mangroves. (left)



Flood Citations for VMR 488 Volunteers

Contributions to the community of Marine Rescue Bundaberg's volunteers during the Burnett floods were recognised by the awarding of Queensland Flood and Cyclone citations to 20 of our members. Contributions included manning *Bundy Rescue*, providing coordination from the radio room and organising food drops to stranded boaties. President John Jacobsen and Secretary Manager Harry Hubner made the trip to Bundaberg for the presentations and joined the recipients and fundraising volunteers for a barbecue. John noted that the Premier's citations indicated the Government recognised the valuable contribution of trained volunteers during such emergencies. The award was struck in Queensland copper with symbols for flowing water, the cyclone and the state's colours.

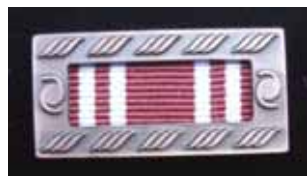
National Sea Rescue Institute – South Africa

During a recent trip to South Africa your correspondent took the opportunity to visit the Port Edward base of our sister organisation, the National Sea Rescue Institute (NSRI). NSRI is

need to deal with rock fisherman has resulted in the development of a polythene condom to protect the jet skis from rocks (see *photo*). The crew's on board wear for the RIBs was a far cry from the VMR livery. RIB crews wear wet suits and helmets because of the 'wet' nature of these boats and danger of head injury from operating at speed in rough conditions (see *photo next page*).

It seems yachties are the same the world over. An anecdote was related about a yacht which left Cape Town for Durban (a journey of approximately 870nm) and might take 8-10 days, but which was not heard of for two weeks. One morning a yacht appeared off Port Edward and a person heading towards shore in a Canadian canoe came to grief in the surf. One of the NSRI members went to the aid of the swimmer who identified with the overdue yacht and whose main concern was that he had lost the three mobile phones he was bringing ashore for battery charging!

Graham Kingston
Public Relations Officer
Marine Rescue Bundaberg



2010-2011 Flood and cyclone citation, with heraldry for flood waters, cyclones and Queensland colours. (above)

John and Harry with some of the Marine Rescue Bundaberg volunteers who received the Premier's Flood and Cyclone citation. (left)

a volunteer organisation with 980 members who provide the only sea rescue service along the South African coast line. NSRI was established in 1967 after 17 fishermen drowned in 1966 largely because of the absence of a sea rescue facility. The NSRI now have a fleet of 92 craft and 27 vehicles. Craft include 10-12m ocean going mono-hulls, 6-8m RIBs, smaller inflatables and jet skis. The annual operating budget is just over AUD3 million (raised by the volunteers and sponsors) and they estimate this saves the government 10 times that if the volunteers had to be paid.

There is a strong reliance on RIBs and jet skis because of the absence of harbours for much of the South African coast and these craft are launched from beaches. The rocky coastline and



NSRI jet ski fitted with a polythene condom for going up against rocky shores. (top)
The wardrobe wall for NSRI rigid inflatable boat crews. (above)

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MEDAL PRESENTATION ...



VMR Hervey Bay members receiving their 2011 Flood Citations.



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Plaque dedicating the kitchen to Bill and Rae Hirn (and others). (above)

Cr Victoria Newton, Bill Hirn, Vicky Darling MLA, Rawe Hirn, and then President David Davis at launch of new kitchen. (right)

Neil Sheppard, new President of VMRB. (below right)



Last issue we mentioned the grant received from the Gambling Community Benefit Fund that has enabled us to refurbish our kitchen. This has had the desired effect of boosting numbers to our monthly barbecues thereby helping our fundraising but mostly encouraging the social interaction between our squadron and associated groups: Sandgate Yacht Club, Sandgate Canoe Club and the Lionfish Dive Group.

The 'launch' of the new stainless steel kitchen was quite a memorable affair, with Vicky Darling MLA and Brisbane City Councillor Victoria Newton on hand to dedicate the kitchen to long-standing and hard-working members, Bill and Rae Hirn 'and all members who have worked tirelessly over the years to make our club so successful'.

The next major event was our Annual General Meeting where we saw a changing of the guard. David Davis handed over the presidency to Neil Sheppard after four great years, while Bob Chapman retained the senior vice-president's role. Wayne Wright was welcomed to the position of junior vice president and Glenn Philip became our new treasurer. David Massam has continued as secretary while Greg Keogh took over the membership role. All other positions remain the same so we are looking forward to ongoing harmony and progress at Sandgate.

A battle with the low tide and subsequent engine problems, saw *Energex Sandgate 1* finally heading in the direction of Tangalooma an hour after their call from the Water Police to assist a vessel, which it had been ascertained was safely at anchor and in no distress. The vessel was relatively easily located in the dark from GPS coordinates provided by the Water Police and soon after was under tow to Nudgee Creek.

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November crew received a call from Water Police stating that an international cargo vessel had observed an upturned boat about 20nm off Cape Moreton and our assistance was required. They were given a lat and long and asked to proceed to the position which was actually north east of the Cape and virtually out from Caloundra. The crew in *Energex Sandgate 1* had just made it to the Pearl Channel when the call came in to stand down as the search had been called off. The vessel had been identified as a boat which had been cut loose from a tow off the north coast earlier in the week.

There were two calls for assistance on Sierra Crew's duty day. They received a telephone call to assist a 23' cruiser that had broken down and was located under the Brisbane Airport flight path. Mobile phone contact was lost before the vessel's location could be determined. *Energex Sandgate 1* checked each vessel they came across on their path to Nudgee Beach. After about an hour of searching, the skipper of the vessel called again and this time contact details were obtained. Finally, after about another one hour search, the broken down vessel was located and it and its crew were safely returned to Cabbage Tree Creek.

Later in the day, a call from the Water Police asked that the grounding of a vessel near the old Houghton Highway be investigated. Again, Sierra Crew set off in *Energex Sandgate 1* – by this time the light was fading and low tide had just passed. On their way to Hays Inlet they were advised that the vessel in



Tow from Tangalooma on November 12.

trouble was a jet ski. "We entered Hays Inlet via the southern channel, all the time concerned about the depth of the water. When we passed under the two bridges we could clearly see the jetski and its owner but due to the sandbanks had no way of reaching the grounded jetski. We nudged *Energex Sandgate 1* into the sand bank and one crew member entered the water and went to make contact with the skipper of the jetski. The

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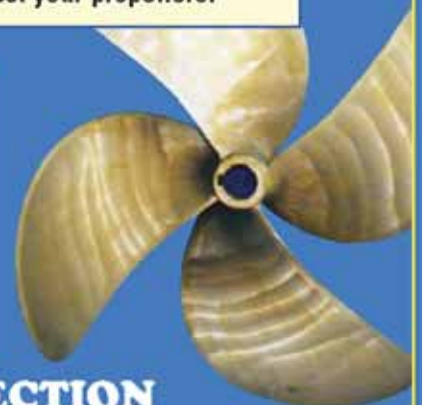
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 Front Row: Dave and Meghan Hudy, Debbie Voysey, Gavin Neilsen, Brian Younger, Mark Stone, Richard Windham

At 2000hrs one Monday night late in August a call was received from Brisbane Water Police requesting assistance to locate a boat that had sunk and left a person in the water. Thomas Grice and David Davis manned *Energex Sandgate 1* and headed for the search area just off Nudgee Beach. As luck would have it, the tide was lifting which gave us the opportunity to widen our search towards the shore as the tide rose. On our second search leg we located what we believed to be the missing boat but no sign of a person in the water. The boat could not be positively identified so we marked its position on our GPS and continued our search. We searched until the tide turned. Our task was becoming difficult as the water shallowed and at times we were working in about one metre of water. At 2300hrs we were joined by the rescue helicopter which conducted a very comprehensive search of the area. They, like us, were unable to locate the person in the water. We were then joined by a police vessel at the search area. We took them in as close as

we could to point out the boat we had located but they were also unable to reach the boat. It was decided highly possible that the person had probably made their way to shore but could not be confirmed. The search was called off at 0100hrs and we returned to base while the Water Police resumed the search at daylight and still no sight of the missing person.

skipper had been trying to refloat the jetski since about 1500 hours and was suffering fatigue and the effects of the cold. Taking a safety-first approach, it was agreed with the skipper would anchor the jetski (for recovery at another time) and return to the safety of our vessel and base. We returned to our base around 1900 hours. Special thanks must go to the two fishermen who attempted to help the skipper of the jetski and assisted us with transporting the skipper from the shallows to *Energex Sandgate 1*.

(Later that day the person concerned realised that there was a search ongoing and notified the police that he was safe and well. It would appear that the vessel we found was the missing vessel. Great result although unfortunately VMRB didn't get any recognition for their efforts in the nightly news reports on TV. The SES, Water Police and Helicopter were given the credit.)

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On September 10, Charlie crew thought the only lives they could save on their duty day were their own by not going out in 30kt winds, but, just as the day was about to end we received a call regarding an eight metre cruiser broken down on the upstream side of the Gateway Bridge. There were two adults and two children on board and we rafted up and brought them back to the Rivergate Marina then made our very rough trip back to our base arriving just after 18.30hrs.

A week later Foxtrot Crew First had quite a busy day. First up was a call from a multihull with only one engine coming down from Redcliffe to CTC. As it was a new and well-kept vessel, they were shadowed across Bramble Bay and advised if they required assistance we were right there.

Next job was a jetski broken down under the Story Bridge wanting a tow to Colmslie boat ramp. It was located with little difficulty so we beached *Energex Sandgate 1* under the bridge, organized the tow, welcomed our towee's on board and set off.

A tow always has its challenges but doing one in the river presents a whole new set of challenges with large river cats, little ferries, pleasure craft of all sizes and jetskis to top it off! It should be mentioned that Foxtrot crew has done some docking and departing training using a mixture of stern lines, bow lines and springers and it was fantastic to see the guys put that training to practical use and in such a professional manner in such a busy area. *Energex Sandgate 1* was docked with no fuss first time and at idle or just over! Brilliant! Well done guys!"

"Straight after that we had a call from base for a vessel requiring a tow from Edward Street Pier to Breakfast Creek but the catch was they were on their way from Toowoomba with the boat trailer and would be approximately two hours. So it was back to base for a quick bite of lunch and check out if we could a) get into Breakfast Creek and b) get under the bridge. After a bit of debate we decided to ring the owner and find out what sort of vessel it actually was. First it was a trailer sailer then it didn't have a mast and eventually we learned it was a 14ft ski boat.

The only reason they wanted to go to Breakfast Creek was it was the only ramp they knew. We identified Davies Park boat ramp would be a much better option so it was back up the river to Stamford Plaza where we identified the vessel, ran them through what we were planning and how to get to Davies Park. It would have been quicker if the towee hadn't taken the car

keys on board! Once again it was great to see the guys get *Energex Sandgate 1*, with a vessel in tow, in and out of a very tight area with lots of moored vessels, a fairly ripping tide and boat traffic to pass the keys to the pontoon.

Sierra crew's roster day fell on Open Day so there was lots of activity. *Energex Sandgate 1* joined the sail past the pontoon for the blessing of the fleet.

Around lunch time we received a call to assist a vessel with engine trouble anchored off the Pinkenba rock wall and requiring a tow to the Colmslie boat ramp. Around closing time we received another call for assistance – the Water Police asked us to assist a vessel that had broken down just off Nudgee Beach. The stricken vessel was soon located and towed to the Nudgee Floodway boat ramp. This was a tricky exercise as the crew picked up the tow just after sunset and with a falling tide the shallow bar at the mouth of the Floodway proved a real challenge. Fortunately the skilled crew navigated the channel successfully and returned back to base around 18:30 hours.

On the last Saturday in September, Delta crew had two jobs using *Energex Sandgate 1* during the watch. A Haines Hunter power boat, with engine trouble, was towed from Mud Island to Cabbage Tree Creek. Later in the day, a 21' 6" power boat, also with engine trouble, required a tow from near the Port of Brisbane Container Wharves to Nudgee Creek.

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Presentation of Flood Citations.

October was a relatively quiet month for SAR activations. Increased boating traffic in November resulted in several rescues. During the down time our crews were busy honing their skills with man overboard, navigation, fire drills, vessel handling and local area knowledge being the main focus areas.

We completed three tows from Tangalooma – one back to the Colmslie boat ramp, one to Wellington Point and the last to Clontarf boat ramp.

Of note is Delta crew's tasking around midday to locate and tow a vessel just off Cape Moreton and return the vessel and crew to Colmslie boat ramp. In moderate conditions the stricken vessel was soon located and the tow commenced. In just under six hours later the tow was completed and the crew returned safe and sound to Base.

Duty Master Callum Baird led a crew of four (Like Hillyard, Cameron Pegler, Andrew Donaldson and Paul Harris) in a SAREX hosted by Bribie Island on November 11. Conditions were favourable and the crew benefited greatly from the experience. Many thanks to VMR Bribie for organising this exercise and inviting us to participate.

Bravo crew's day started with a request from the Brownsea Scouts to supply a safety vessel as they had 40 sea scouts for a canoeing trip through the wetlands. "We launched *Sandgate 2* and stood by to assist. We then launched *Sandgate 1* and spent the morning on a training exercise. After we returned at midday, a call was received to assist a vessel at the Tangalooma Wrecks –

the vessel had mechanical problems and could not be started. There were two adults and six children on board. After a 50 minute run we located the vessel and towed them back to the Clontarf boat ramp."

Around 3pm on Monday, November 14, we received a call from the Water Police to activate a crew to search for a 5.4m powerboat vessel experiencing difficulties near Cape Moreton. To complicate matters, four crew from the vessel had been put ashore and two of these were now missing. Our task was to go to Comboyuro Point then progress north searching the beach for the lost vessel and the lost crew. Duty Master Callum Baird responded to the call and a crew was assembled. Just prior to departure we were advised by the Water Police to stand down as the vessel and missing crew had been located. We were then asked by the Water Police to attend to an urgent medivac (ill child). Callum, Ray Henery and two ambulance officers set off for Tangalooma in rough conditions. By the time our crew arrived at Tangalooma the medical emergency had alleviated. Callum and crew now faced an uncomfortable journey home. Some six hours after activation our crew finally made it home – another job well done.

On November 25, 14 of our members were presented with the Queensland Government's 2010/2011 Flood and Cyclone

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Port of Brisbane's Peter Keyte, General Manager Trade Services, presenting their Sponsorship Cheque to Neil Sheppard, President of VMRB.

Citation for their efforts in the January floods. John Jacobsen and Harry Hubner from VMRAQ attended the evening when presentations were made by Inspector David Kolb, State Water Police Coordinator, Vicky Darling MLA and BCC Cr Victoria Newton.

One of the key challenges for us, apart from successfully responding to all calls for assistance, is the rejuvenation of our crews. Today the average age of our crew is 58 years. If we are to meet the needs of our community well into the future, then it is essential that we retain and develop the talent already in our ranks and find ways to attract and retain new members to the club, particularly those with an interest in joining a crew. No doubt other squadrons are facing the same predicament so we would be interested in hearing how this problem is being addressed.

We are fortunate to have a new sponsor on board. Port of Brisbane has joined Energex in offering their support and we are very grateful. With their contribution we have been able to purchase a thermal imaging unit for *Energex Sandgate 1*. In addition, Kedron Wavell has recognised our community commitment through their Community Investment Grant and awarded us \$2,500 which we have used to replace our recently failed computer equipment in our radio room and office. Jupiter's Casino Gambling Benefit Fund granted us \$75,000 to put towards a shallow water rescue vessel and we are busy identifying the best craft for the job.

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bribie island VMR



Marine Rescue Bribie Vice-Commodore Bob Skinner on *Energex Bribie 2* practicing his golf swing for the September Golf Day.



Flare Training on September 10, 2011



Crew members training with different flares.



Michelle Washer, Vince Bowser, Wyatt Roy MP and OIC John White.

VMR Bribie Island Classic Fund Raising Golf Day was held on Friday, September 23 at the Bribie Island Golf Club. This was such a successful event we are thinking of holding an annual event. Pictured is Vice-Commodore Bob Skinner practicing his gold swing on the front of *Energex Bribie Two*.

On Saturday, September 10 Marine Rescue Bribie held a training 'Flare Demonstration' that was open to the public. With safety officer present all crew members trained the correct way to use flares and the variation in the flares.

Wyatt Roy MP visits VMR Bribie

On Saturday September 10, 2011 Wyatt Roy MP, Member for Longman, visited Marine Rescue Bribie to have a first hand look at our operations.

After meeting with Commodore Wayne Sclater and most of the management committee, Wyatt took a tour of *Energex Bribie 2* and *Bribie 3*. He was then treated to a morning tea organised by the ladies of the social committee where he met with crew members.



VALE

Bruce Giles

VMR 773
July 16, 1948 - November 2, 2011

One of Marine Rescue Bribie Radio Operators Bruce Giles passed away suddenly after losing his battle with Mesothelioma Cancer. Bruce had been a member of VMR for seven years and was a colourful character around the base. He did his last radio duty only a week before he passed away. Bruce was told nine years ago that he only had 12 months to live, not content with this he fought the disease hard, bike riding every Tuesday with mates and enjoying many overseas trips and caravanning adventures with his wife Sharyn.

During his working life he ran and owned a successful air conditioning company, was a member of The Underwater Research Group of Queensland SCUBA diving club and at one stage owned and ran a dive charter boat.

Bruce loved life, his wife Sharyn, his daughters and their partners Karen and Neil/Deborah and Aaron his grandkids Finn and Kiara and his mates.

Members from Marine Rescue Bribie formed a guard of honour at his funeral in a fitting final tribute to one of their own.

VMR names 'Busy Fingers Kitchen'



Commodore Wayne Sclater with part of the Busy Fingers Team who attended the naming of the Busy Fingers Kitchen at VMR Bribie.

The Sunset Drinks on Friday, September 30, 2011 were especially significant to VMR this month as Commodore Wayne Sclater officially named the new kitchen at the Bribie Base 'The Busy Fingers Kitchen'.

Busy Fingers are one of our ongoing major sponsors and never want any recognition for the enormous contributions they donate to us at Marine Rescue Bribie.

In appreciation we decided to name our newly furnished kitchen after them.

Thank you again for your ongoing support.



VMR Bribie Island Skipper Peter Raymont showing Will Stark, 11, from the Pamphlete Graceville Sea Scouts how to wear a life jacket. Picture by Peter McNamara


Seascouts Visit VMR Bribie

Pamphlete Graceville Sea Scouts visited the Marine Rescue Base on Sunday, September 18, 2011. Eighteen Scouts were accompanied by four Scout leaders and assistants.

The Pamphlete Sea Scouts have not been able to sail on the water since the floods, which cause substantial damage to their clubhouse as well as destroyed the ramps where they launch their kayaks and sail boats.

They visited Marine Rescue Bribie to have a look at our operations and enjoyed a tour of the base and *Energex Bribie 2*. They took their vessels for a sail and came back to the base to enjoy a sausage sizzle that had been supplied for them.

There is a big demand all across Queensland for Scout leaders, so if you have some free time and enjoy the outdoors, call the Scout Association of Qld for more details.


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Ray Fox, Hans Lubbers
John Burdett with his
plaque, Wayne Sclater and
Peter Raymond. (above)

Marine Rescue Bribie's
Radio Officer Kevin James
explains the new
Electronic Radio Log On
System to visiting
members of Coast Guard
Redcliffe. (right)

Picture by Peter McNamara



Coast Guard visits VMR radio room

On Saturday, October 15 two vessels from Coast Guard Redcliffe led by skipper Peter Slaughter visited Marine Rescue Bribie to see first-hand how the electronic radio log operates and the additional data the computers place in the hands of radio operators.



Marine Rescue Bribie's radio operator Keith Walter was the first radio operator to run live with the new electronic radio log on system.

Picture by Peter McNamara

Plaque presented to VMR UTC

On September 18 Marine Rescue Bribie Commodore Wayne Sclater, presented Red Sunday OIC (Officer In Charge) John Burdett with a plaque in recognition for his years of work in his former role as unit training co-ordinator.

Radio Room Upgrade

Recently the radio group at VMR Bribie has developed and implemented an electronic radio log to record the movement of vessels.

The introduction of the electronic radio log has required refurbishment to the 'Barney McMahon Radio Room' to accommodate keyboards and monitors. The main advantage of the system is that once the details of a particular vessel have been recorded, that information does not need to be collected again, allowing 'boaties' to just give relevant information for each particular trip.

This record of the voyage including destination and return time is electronically stored and can be recalled at any time by Marine Rescue Bribie. The main advantage of the system is that once the details of a particular vessel have been recorded, that information does not need to be collected again in the future when the vessel logs on for a subsequent voyage.

This electronic radio log, while not totally unique in South East Queensland, has created a considerable amount of interest amongst other Volunteer Marine Rescue and Volunteer Coast Guard squadrons.

VMR member Gary Adams has spent many hours developing and refining the system to suit Marine Rescue Bribie's requirements.

Kevin James – VMR radio officer said it is a credit to the whole team in the radio room.



Kevin James who has just retired as radio officer of Marine Rescue Bribie after two years in the job. Kevin in this role oversees the installation of new aerials at the base, and was the driving force for the refurbishment of the radio room and introduction of the electronic radio system. Will have more to this story in the next edition of the journal.

MUSCLE CONTRACTION

A professor at a university medical faculty was giving a lecture on 'Involuntary Muscle Contraction' to his first year medical students. Realising this was not the most riveting subject, the professor decided to lighten the mood slightly and challenge the group. He pointed to a middle aged woman in the front row and said, "Do you know what your arse is doing while you're having an orgasm?" She replied "Probably golfing with his mates".



The new Marine Rescue Bribie's pontoon played host to Coast Guard Redcliffe's two rescue vessels along with *Energex Bribie One* and *Energex Bribie Two*. (above) Picture by Peter McNamara

The new Marine Rescue Bribie Vice Commodore Bob Skinner gets congratulated by Commodore Wayne Sclater after being appointed at the VMR annual general meeting held at the base on Saturday, October 1, 2011. (right)



VMR AGM

Marine Rescue Bribie held its AGM on Saturday, October 1, 2011. The members were happy to re-elect all positions. The only change is our vice commodore who did not run for this position but stays on the board and a new Treasurer, Adrian Westerman.

Our new vice-commodore is Bob Skinner. We welcome Bob to our team and look forward to another year of 'going forward'.

Thank you to all members who attended and showed overwhelming confidence in the present board.


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VMR Saves Man Overboard

On Monday afternoon October 3 Water Police activated Marine Rescue Bribie to attend to a man who had fallen overboard from his capsized 'tinny'.

Coxswain Bob Skinner and crew took *Energex Bribie 2* to the scene where two (2) jetski riders had helped the man to shore. The crew aboard *Energex Bribie 2* ferried the man back to the base to awaiting QAS Officers who transported him to hospital.

The crew then returned to the area and 'righted' the vessel and because it was a shipping hazard, towed and secured it to the pontoon in front of the VMR base.

Bill Gibbings Celebrates 50th Wedding Anniversary



Bill Gibbings and his wife Bev celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary at Marine Rescue Bribie on Saturday, November 12, 2011 with family and friends. Bill one of the hard working volunteers in the radio room and maintenance crew, was also presented with a plaque from vice commodore Bob Skinner in appreciation from the squadron for all of his work at the base.

Pictures by Peter McNamara



VMR Celebrates Melbourne Cup



Kay Benson – Best Dressed on the field.



Jannine Jaavuo – Best Hat.



Trish Templar – Lady whose outfit was nearest to the colours of the winning jockey.



Sheryl Triall – Runner up Fashion on the Field.

On Wednesday, November 1, 2011, 66 guests and members attended the Melbourne Cup celebration held at the Bribie Island Marine Rescue Base.

With many prizes won and the 'big screen' entertainment, the guest enjoyed a wonderful meal and dessert prepared by Narelle and her staff from 'The Golden Roast' – 'Coast to Coast'.

Prizes won were as follows:

- Lucky Door Prize - John Powell
- Best Dressed Male - John Triall and Max Rasmussen
- Best All Round - Betty Snell

Everyone had a very pleasant day and enjoyed celebrating the Melbourne Cup in our wonderful function room at the base. Thank you all for supporting your local VMR unit.



MATINEE WARD STORY

Woman: I want to see an out-turn.
 Nurse: You mean an intern.
 Woman: Oh well I want a contamination anyway.
 Nurse: No, No you mean an examination.
 Woman: Alright, alright in any case I want to go to the fraternity ward.
 Nurse: No, No it's the maternity ward you want.
 Woman: What the hell – out turn, intern, contamination, examination fraternity, maternity.
 All know is that I have not demonstrated for three months, and I think I'm stagnant.



Coast Guard Vessels arriving at Marine Rescue Bribie's pontoon to raft up against *Energex Bribie 1* and *Energex Bribie 2* in preparation for SAREX exercise held on the night of Friday 11/11/2011. (above)

Picture by Peter McNamara

Crews from VMR and Coast Guard squadrons listen to the briefing for the night SAREX exercise at Marine Rescue Bribie before beginning their exercise Marine Rescue Bribie crew member and radio operator Brian Pratt (with glasses). (far left)

Picture by Peter McNamara

Senior Sgt Jim Whitehead State Search and Rescue Coordinator briefing crews from VMR and Coast Guard Squadrons for the night SAREX exercise at Marine Rescue Bribie before beginning their exercise. (left)

Picture by Peter McNamara

SAREX

On Friday night, November 10, VMR Bribie Island conducted a Search and Rescue exercise off Woorim. The Marine Recue Bribie Commodore Wayne Sclater welcomed everyone to the base and emphasised the importance training and of all rescue organisations working well together, as we leadup to the holiday season.

Rescue vessels from VMR Sandgate, Coast Guard Redcliffe and Coast Guard Caloundra as well as Marine Rescue Bribie's *Energex Bribie 1* and *Energex Bribie 2*. In total, seven were involved in the exercise and all the crews gained valuable experience in line searches and the operation of their vessels in adverse lighting conditions.

At the conclusion of the night, a de-brief was held and all aspects of the exercise had been discussed to enable all the squadrons to better improve our abilities in aiding the boating public. Overall, the night proved to be invaluable to the Units involved and the experience gained.

Well everyone, that is all from VMR Bribie 'The Home of Safe Boating'.

More news next issue. 'Stay safe on the water'.

Cheryl Fullgrabe – Public Relations Officer
VMR Bribie Island Inc.,

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southportVMR

Things are really starting to heat up on the Gold Coast's magnificent array of waterways. The warm weather has arrived and so have the rapidly increasing number of calls for assistance. Both midweek and weekend crews have been kept very busy with vessels breaking down, along with an increased number of vessels running aground.

Of most concern is the number of vessels contacting VMR requiring assistance for fuel related issues – usually lack of. I may have addressed this previously but in this area we tend to see an increase in vessels running dry of fuel as the price of fuel increases. Most boaties set out prepared to spend \$100 on fuel but fail to take into account that \$100 of fuel 12-18 months ago was considerably more than in today's economy.



Over the past quarter Southport has been lucky enough to appoint two new inshore skippers, Robert Fisher and Kate O'Shea. Both Rob and Kate are long time members and both very deserving and very capable in their achievements. Kate becomes the first female skipper at Southport for a number of years but has another aspirant, soon to hopefully keep her company.

Crew training is still progressing well with 10 members currently enjoying their Elements of Shipboard Safety course and another four have just successfully completed their effective communications subject. Well done to all of those who have completed and good luck to those who are completing courses.

Southport has had its AGM and a new committee is already working hard to keep the cogs ticking and the wheels turning. We have a big year ahead of us and already the enthusiasm is reaping benefits.

Well it's almost Christmas time again and I am sure everyone is looking forward to the break and getting out on the water so may I take this opportunity to wish everyone a safe and happy festive season and don't hesitate to contact VMR if your time on the water turns sour.

Blessing the Fleet

On Saturday, September 10, Black crew was given the task of representing VMR Southport at the annual Southport Yacht Club 'Blessing of the Fleet' sail past.

The day was beautiful and clear however the wind was howling from a westerly direction reaching 40kts at the Seaway Tower at times, with the temperature very cool due to the wind.

The plan was for the three VMR vessels to be part of the procession of craft which were to sail from the Deep Hole at Runaway Bay to the Southport Yacht Club where festivities were to take place to promote a safe boating season ahead.

At approximately 1345 hours, whilst waiting to begin the journey, the VMR vessels were alerted to a radio call made to the Seaway Tower by a whale watching vessel, regarding what was thought to be an overturned vessel south east of the Gold Coast Seaway.

Considering the strength of the wind, there was a real possibility that a vessel could have capsized in the conditions, and both *Marine Rescue 1* and *Marine Rescue 2* proceeded toward the Seaway in preparation.

Shortly after, confirmation came of this incident with further information that five people were clinging to the upturned hull of a yacht, and there were injuries to some of these people.

Communications were made with Gold Coast Water Police who hastily activated and proceeded to the location of the incident with both marine rescue vessels. Once on site, coordination was taken by Water Police vessel *DA Shean* who assessed the situation and took onboard the vessel passengers, giving first aid to one injured person. Queensland Ambulance were also contacted and immediately dispatched to the VMR base.

The five wet, cold and glad to be alive sailors, were then transferred to *Marine Rescue 2* who provided blankets for the return trip to the VMR Southport rescue base to awaiting paramedics.

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One person was treated for a leg laceration, but amazingly all onboard survived the incident relatively unscathed, albeit thanking the gods for what could have been.

Meanwhile back off shore *Marine Rescue 1* and the water police vessel were busy trying to secure the upturned 35ft vessel from becoming a floating marine navigation hazard.

Due to the size of the vessel and its construction design, the vessel could not be righted and was eventually towed upside down by *Marine Rescue 1* back to the VMR swing mooring. This tow proceeded at a top speed of 1.7kts due to the unfavourable wind and sea conditions, but fortunately the two hour tow from the vessel's location back to the Seaway coincided with a favourable change of tide which further assisted the tow back to VMR.

The following week the vessel was salvaged by the owner's insurance company, lifted by a crane from the water, and trucked away for further assessment.

This incident proved to be a great training exercise for the VMR crews as it is very unusual for a vessel of that size to roll over. It was also very fortunate for the occupants of the yacht that no-one was seriously injured.

Thankfully this vessel had logged its trip details with the Seaway Tower who would have been able to provide vital information to Emergency Services had their logged time of return not been adhered to, and their mishap not been seen.

Glenn Norris

NOTABLE JOBS aka Mentionable Things

A man was recently presented at the front gates of VMR stating that while sailing the Queensland Coast his sister had died and he needed to speak to someone about the matter. Quickly on the scene was the day's duty skipper who greeted the man and expressed his sorrow, believing that the lady's body was aboard the vessel from which this man had just disembarked in the marine stadium. A correct assumption was made and in fact the lady's body was on board but in the form of cremated ashes and the man actually wanted VMR to assist him in dispersing the ashes at sea. How easily words can be misinterpreted.

A crew was dispatched recently to assist a man who had run aground on the centre banks of the Broadwater, in front of the Labrador foreshore. Much to the amazement of the crew – they couldn't fathom how anyone could travel 80m out of the channel and end up stuck where the man was. Apparently this boatie, not familiar with the area, had taken off from the Grand boat ramp and headed south-east, like his mates had told him to do. The only detail missing was that they didn't tell him that he had to clear the seaway first before he headed south-east. Via mobile the man was talked through how to find deep water getting him out of his predicament.

VMR Southport was recently activated to transport QAS Paramedics to a reported snakebite on South Stradbroke Island. Upon arrival the patient was quickly treated by the paramedics who immobilised the patient's leg after what looked like two small puncture wounds were located. In order to assist doctors at the hospital a friend of the patient had caught the snake for identification and put it in a bag. One could only imagine walking into a local hospital with a snake in a bag and the commotion that it would cause but in this instance the snake was less than 25cms long! The medicos were convinced it had bitten the patient who was treated accordingly.

A gentleman who was towed by VMR Southport recently was so impressed by the service that he couldn't stop talking about it. As his gesture of appreciation, instead of making a donation, and as he was a non member, he chose rather to pay for his family to join as members. Not a bad earn when you consider he wanted individual memberships for himself, his three children – who all have boats and his brother – who also owns a boat. The gesture was even more surprising when this man's tow was from South Wavebreak Island channel to the Grand boat ramp, amassing a total of a seven minute trip. VMR memberships make a great gift, especially with Christmas approaching.

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victoria ptVMR

I must apologise on behalf of the unit for the lack of reports in the past. We will be endeavouring to rectify this as I have been given the illustrious title of Media Officer. Don't be fooled by the title, as I have found out it only means 'extra work'. Silly me, as I thought it was prestigious.

With the holding of our Annual General Meeting in August, a new committee has been formed:

Ian Spann	Commodore (new to the job and a skipper on D Roster)
Allan Harford	Vice Commodore (in for another year, duty skipper on B Roster)
Chris Barnes	Secretary (Skipper on C Roster)
Mandy Paylor	Treasurer (just likes playing with figures?)
Peter Callander	Executive Officer (in for another year, skipper on B Roster). The unit wishes the new committee all the best for the coming term and also thanks the out-going commodore Ian Ivory for his leadership and ex-secretary Ann Ivory for her hard work.

The new committee is off to a flying start with a radio room revamp. The old furniture is going and being replaced with purpose built cabinets and desks. Our computer system and some programs are receiving the treatment by Dave Paylor (our first IT Officer); I can't wait to see the final result and it should be great.

A base barbecue was held on Sunday afternoon October 9, after operations had closed for the weekend. Apart from getting together with our crew mates and friends, we wanted to get the recipients of the '2010-2011 Queensland Flood and Cyclone Citation' together for a photo shoot to place on our honour board. Some of the stories that came from the crews were horrific. They certainly placed themselves in danger to help others. Congratulations for the great work that you did during that time.

Some life memberships have been granted recently they are:

- Trevor Connolly
- Barry O'Driscoll
- Col Sergeant
- Glen Norris
- Allan Harford
- Marilyn Harford
- Lloyd Finn
- Ian Priestley

To gain life membership in our unit, you must have served as an active member for at least 10 years and have an exemplary record.



From left to right: Ian Spann (Commodore), Peter Callander (Executive Officer), Steve Myers (Duty Skipper), Alan Harford (Vice Commodore), Robert Collyer (WHSO), Marilyn Harford (Membership Officer), Ed Pepping (Skipper), Ted Scovell (Skipper).

Absent were: Chris Barnes (Secretary), Del Mirams, Des Binstead and Don Jackson.



Some Senior Skipper ranks have also been granted recently:

- Trevor Connolly
- Barry O'Driscoll (who also holds a Master Class 4)
- Allan Harford
- Marilyn Harford
- Ian Priestley

Our latest Boaties Market has just past with another great result. Thanks go to Ted Scovell (fund raising officer) and Peter Callander for their assistance – the market generated much needed funds to put fuel into our rescue boats. We have plans to expand our efforts on the next big day, so more about that as they evolve.

Part of my new duties will be resurrecting an old magazine that the unit once published, *The Bay Patrol*. A copy will be sent to all Marine Rescue Units in Queensland. I hope you enjoy the read.

We have plans to replace our primary rescue vessel *Victoria Point One* in the near future. Our boating committee, headed by Allan Harford, has been seen around the bay testing all the boats that the committee members can get their hands on. Tough job, but someone has to do it.

The biggest news from Vicky Pt is that we have a new vessel *Papillon*. It is a 5.45m, aluminium, centre console, powered by a 140hp Suzuki and built by Yamba Welding Works. This vessel was kindly donated to Marine Rescue, Victoria Point by a very generous benefactor. This gentleman resides on one of the bay Islands and is an avid fisherman. When he bought his island residence, he already had *Papillon* and the house came with a tractor to launch and retrieve from the beach and a tinny. This tinny apparently is good luck, as he has never caught so many fish, so *Papillon* was made redundant. He donated this vessel to our unit on the proviso that it would be used for rescues and



that is something that we can guarantee. We will be keeping its original name, however I expect the radio call sign will become *Victoria Point 2*. We are very grateful for this generosity and the service it will provide to our boating public.

Currently, we are in the process of gaining marine survey for this vessel, but typically there are seemingly insurmountable problems to be conquered, no wonder that the commodore has grey hair. There will be more on *Papillon* in the next journal, hopefully with some on-water pictures.

Ian Priestley
Media Officer
Marine Rescue, Victoria Point



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mackayVMR

Changing of the Guard

At the AGM earlier this year a new team was elected to take the squadron forward over the next 12 months. Our new president is Peter Smith who brings with him a broad range of skills to the role and Peter's principle objective is to "make VMR more visible and open to our Mackay community".

The new team will enhance the tireless work undertaken by Charlie Brownlow, who in his three years in the role of President put the Mackay squadron on a sound business footing. Congratulations to Charlie and his committee for their commitment and we wish them well in future endeavours.

Activations

The last three months has seen a steady range of activations ranging from assisting an injured crewman from one of the coal supply ships and transporting him to hospital onshore, to towing a holed yacht back to the marina following her inaugural voyage, to assisting the usual boaties that either run out of fuel or have trouble with lack of maintenance of their equipment particularly engines.

With the increased size of vessels and the changing demographics of the area we are finding that we are having to travel longer distances to rescue people as they seek to travel further and further to the outer reef. Similarly, due to many of our community working in the nearby mining industry and being on shift work, the usual weekend activity has started to spread across the full extent of the week which increases the pressure on the active VMR members to support week day activations.

Training

Congratulations to all of our newly appointed skippers. We are in the process of ensuring that the load across the squadron can be spread over an increased number of qualified skippers. Our experienced skippers are leading by example and are mentoring the new team of enthusiastic skippers and this has been reflected in the activity on Wednesday training nights

A comprehensive training program is being developed for implementation in early 2012 in order to compliment crew numbers and encourage new members to participate in VMR activities.

One of the more specific training activities that was undertaken was a joint exercise with the Central Queensland Rescue helicopter crew. This was a great opportunity for all involved to develop the skills necessary to remove an injured person from the VMR rescue boat onto the helicopter.





Our radio operators continue to provide invaluable service to the boating public for the full seven days a week from 8.03am to 18.03pm. It has been greatly appreciated by the many people we assist each day. We are always on the look out for more help in the radio room so if you can assist then now is the time to come forward.



Community Events

The great weather conditions in the later part of the year usually means that there are heaps of community events that VMR has the opportunity to participate and promote our role.

*Photo above courtesy
Andrew Cricks
Photography*

One of the major events was the Off Shore Power Boat event in Mackay with VMR providing rescue services to the event. Both VMR Mackay vessels were deployed on a roving commission around the course as this allowed an overall operational role whilst still providing the opportunity to leave the event in the case of an emergency elsewhere. It was a pity that racing on the first day was cancelled due to inclement weather but the second day made up for it with excitement all round with the seas a little lumpy.

Members of the VMR squadron were also involved in the dive rescue team that over saw the event from the helicopters as well as the coordination of the car parking for the two day event ... who said VMR members were not versatile.

Mackay Regional Council also ran its 'River to Reef' community day in October in which we were also actively involved by providing water safety support in the Pioneer River for the annual raft race and other water events. Well done to all our members who helped promote our cause and raised funds.

America's Cup 12m Yachts

The Whitsundays has been renowned as the graveyard for old America's Cup 12m maxi yachts. Well not anymore ... an organisation (Australian 12m Historic Trust) has been established to bring at least two of them back to life. *Australia KA-5* and *Steak and Kidney KA-14* have just received a refit at Mackay Harbour in preparation for their sail to Wollongong in NSW. Once back in Wollongong they will be used to train our younger generation in the pleasures of sailing and the history of America's Cup racing particularly the role that Australia played in taking the Cup from the US for the first time in 1983.

Illustrating the diverse skills of VMR members, two of our members volunteered to assist as crew for the rather slow trip from Mackay to Brisbane and then onto Sydney ... well done guys. Check out the progress of our team and the voyage of the 12m yachts on <http://www.australian12m.com>

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north stradbrokeVMR

Gearing up for the holiday season is what everyone is doing at the moment and we are no different, except that our efforts will involve ensuring we have enough people rostered on for Medivacs 24/7 as well as the normal boating incidents that arise. It will be a busy period for us all no doubt.

I mentioned in the last edition that I would know our new executive which includes:

- President Richard Dunn
- Vice President Lucy Trippett
- Secretary Tom Slattery
- Treasurer Jan Smith

Richard has already made everyone jump through the hoops and has some great ideas in helping us become an increasingly efficient unit.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank past president, John Willet, for all the work he has done for Marine Rescue NSI over many years and of course, the wider island community because of his work. John remains on the committee and shall take great pleasure in continuing to annoy us.

A couple of months ago, I received a call from a guy on his boat in the Rainbow Channel. He had spotted a sailing craft obviously aground off the north east of Peel Island. The skipper had not contacted anyone but we decided to investigate anyway. Rob Brain and Richard Dunn took our small boat out and found the boat, a 40 odd foot timber hull single master high and dry with the skipper sitting on the rail staring out to sea. It took the boys a bit to get the guy to collect some of his chattels and leave the boat, let alone give his name. He agreed to return to our base the next day so we could take him back to his boat, pump it out and effect some repairs. VMR Raby Bay had kindly offered to come over to help with the repairs.

To everyone's annoyance, he failed to show and wouldn't answer his phone. He turned up a week later, asked to borrow a pump (as he had co-opted some local net fisherman to help him) and set off to refloat his boat. They managed to do so and towed it into One Mile anchorage where it promptly sunk again. Two weeks later he turned up again asking if we could pump him out and tow him to Wieman Creek at Redlands where the boat would be repaired. Obviously this would have been a delicate operation as his boat drew eight feet, a pump would have to be going the whole time, and tides would have been crucial. We asked him who the repairer was so we could contact them to ensure all was above board so to speak. He didn't get back to us and the boat remains firmly on its side as a number of you may have seen.

We subsequently found that the boat was unregistered so we would not have been able to touch it anyway. You do have to have sympathy for the guy because it was his home.

I have left the best to last. Marine Rescue North Stradbroke Island is proud to announce that, for the next three years, we will be proudly sponsored by SIBELCO through their Sandmining Community Benefit Fund. This will, of course allow us to budget for the future with more certainty and less pressure in worrying about the myriad of things that ensure we can serve the Island and boating community to the best of our ability. Our base and boats will reflect SIBELCO's generous input.

Doug Fraser

TROUBLE ON THE FARM

A Queensland farmer drove to a neighbour's farmhouse and knocked on the door. A boy, about nine, opened the door. "Is your Dad home?" said the farmer. "No mate, he isn't, he went to town." "Well, is your Mother here?" "No, she went to town with Dad". "How about your brother, Howard? Is he here?" "No mate, he went with Mum and Dad." The farmer stood there for few minutes, shifting from one foot to the other and mumbling to himself. "Is there anything I can do for you? I know where all the tools are, or I can give dad a message." "Well," said the farmer uncomfortably. "I really wanted to talk to your Dad. It's about your brother Howard getting my daughter Susie pregnant." The boy thought for a moment. You need to talk to Dad about that. I know he charges \$500 for the bull and \$50 for the pig, I don't know how much he charges for Howard."



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round hill VMR



The last financial year saw *Round Hill Rescue* activated 23 times returning 42 persons to safety using 3923 litres of fuel. These tasks included breakdowns, insufficient fuel, groundings, flare sightings and an EPIRB activation. Approximately 330.6 man hours were expended as well as the crew being placed on standby for many hours for various situations.

Added to this is radio operations with 11,143 calls logged (down on last year – weather conditions) with 4197.5 hours monitoring VHF 16,81,82 from 0630 to 1800 daily and 4562.5 night watch.

Training has also been undertaken.

Round Hill Rescue is going well. She currently has 500 hours on her motors. Another funding application has been submitted to QGC (Queensland Gas Company) to re-power her with 225hp Suzuki 4 stroke motors. Cost \$53K.

Membership is slowly increasing. New colour membership and information forms have been produced.

Our sincere thanks to our dedicated rescue boat crew members who at the drop of a hat turn out to assist the boating public and our thanks also to their partners and families who's support we greatly appreciate.

Thanks also to our radio operators Ruth, David, Jan, Lee and Josie for their continued efforts. As usually we continue to receive high praise from the boating public for our professional approach and assistance received. We always welcome any new members who are interested in assisting for a few hours each week with radio operations.

On the maintenance side thanks mainly to Doug, Archie and Rapa for their assistant during the year.

In February the state held a meeting for all squadron presidents or nominees with state councillors in Brisbane. Vice president Neale with Doug attended.

At zone level Doug and Neale have been attending. At the Central Zone elections in August a changing of the guard with Graeme Morley (Bundaberg VMR) elected as president and Josie Meng (Round Hill VMR) as vice president for the next two years.

Election of Office Bearers for 2011-2012

- President Craig Gibbs
- Vice President Neale Inskip
- Secretary Josie Meng
- Treasurer Doug Meng
- Committee Archie Hutton
Laurie Rapa

Presentation of Flood Citation Medals

Sgt Jock Edwards Agnes Water Police and Assistant SAR officer made the presentation of the special citation medal struck by the government in recognition of the outstanding work by all Department of Community Safety staff and volunteers during the flood and cyclone disasters that affected Queensland over the summer of 2010-2011.



VMR Round Hill recipients were Doug Meng SAR Coordinator, Ruth Tidy (L) and Josie Meng (R) Radio Operators.

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WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

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SQUADRON

WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

The Squadron shall:

- (a) Ensure by all practical means, the observance of Workplace Health and Safety Standards as may be required.
- (b) Ensure that all Squadron working/active members should have regards for the Health and Safety of themselves and others.
- (c) Conduct appropriate Health and Safety educational programs.
- (d) By periodic Safety Audits, identify unsafe or unsatisfactory equipment, conditions or practices and take steps to rectify these.
- (e) Maintain records of work associated illness or injury.

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whitsundaysVMR



Whitsunday VMR AGM

At the Annual General Meeting the existing members of the management committee were returned to office, unopposed for another year.

It is the season for Annual General Meetings and the above picture shows the AGM of the Northern Zone of VMRAQ. Our zone includes, Mackay, Midge Point, Whitsunday, Bowen and the Burdekin. The photo shows the meeting in progress. David Hodge of Mackay was elected zone president and Adrian Tilney, also of Mackay was elected vice president.

The state president John Jacobsen and vice president Tony Hawkins were in attendance. John announced that he would be stepping down this year. In his address he stressed the need for all the groups to bring all their constitutions into line with each other to avoid some of the admin problems that currently exists. He pointed out that all representatives to zone and state meetings had to represent the whole organisation not just the units they come from.

President's Report to the Annual General Meeting.

The year 2010/2011 has been characterised as 'business as usual' with the VMR Whitsunday organisation proceeding to do its job of making the Whitsundays a safer place to go boating.

We were very fortunate to obtain a grant from CYCA to replace our motors which means that our accumulated funds are still on line to purchase a new boat when our current boat reaches its design life in several years time.

Centro Trust made us a grant towards upgrading our boat radios.

Whitsunday Shire made a grant to assist with the replacement of our base computer.

Our local sponsors have stood by us for another year.

Meridian Marina has allowed us free use of a pen in the marina and have given us a significant subsidy on our fuel.

Hawkes Boatyard has continued giving us free use of their lift and yard for our maintenance.

A number of local tradesmen and businesses have assisted us in ways large and small to keep our boat in sea going order.

To the members of the management committee, secretary Betty, treasurer Col, unit training officer Geoff, member Ian and vice president Nick, I extend my thanks for the way you have made your time available to attend meetings and do the essential administrative work necessary to keep the organisation going.



(Front) Col Ayers, Treasurer; Betty Wilson, Secretary; Nick Talbot Price, Vice President; (Rear) Ian Nichols, Member and Robin Salmon, President. Absent at work was Geoff Fitzsimmons who is also the Unit Training Officer.

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To Jude Mitchelsen, I thank you for coming aboard and helping with the administrative work and also for working to get a fundraising committee going. Also, of course, for doing the hard grind of making grant applications.

Gaye and Vivianne, I thank you for your efforts in keeping the food on the table for the monthly meetings.

Will Kamsteeg has represented us on the zone board meetings and also organises the collection tins to be seen on the counter of many businesses in the town. Although Ian Stone has had to resign as an operational member, he still maintains our website. David Morris has taken on the responsibility for maintenance of the base, Mick Evans has taken on the maintenance of the boat.

Operational Crew

We have six skippers and three reserve skippers with 17 crew persons who are available for call out. We could use more and there are a number of persons working to increase their qualifications.

We have sufficient radio crew to man the first four weeks of the month where the shifts roll over from month to month but we do need more radio operators for where the month has five weeks.

We have five members who take turns at holding the emergency phone which is our primary source of contact when the radio base is not manned. We have five members who hold the post of internal SARCO who work with the emergencyphone holders.

Training

Unit Training Officer Geoff Fitzsimmons continues to provide training for all members desirous of improving the level of their qualifications. Geoff is now working week on and week off at the mines and can only do training every second week.

One radio course was run earlier in the year and another is currently under way. A search and rescue course has just been completed.

Secretary Betty will comment on activations in detail but generally these have been down for the year, possibly due to the economic downturn.

Secretary Betty will also comment on memberships generally. We need more operational members at all levels.



The Real VMR

The, not so romantic side of VMR is shown by Andre Antonov hosing down the boat following an activation. We pride ourselves on leaving the boat wholly ready for the next activation before we lock up after a job. Because of this a new crew, on an urgent callout, can board the boat and after the minimum of pre-departure checks, head off with confidence that *VMR1* is ready in all respects to put to sea.

Likewise, it is any number of other helpers, who work behind the scenes to keep the organisation going, that make it possible for VMR Whitsunday to function as a total organisation

The people who maintain our radio and training rooms, the boat maintenance officer, the unit training officer, the fundraising group, the roster clerk, the management committee, all do their bit to keep things going ... And every one is essential.

Oh, and by the way so are the radio operators and boat crew, bless em all.

Successful Radio Course

Congratulations to the following people who successfully completed the radio course at VMR recently and have been awarded their certificates of competency:

- Andrew Antonow - pass - OMC 050985
- Sharon Flint-McLaughlin - pass - OMC 050986
- Stephen Halter - pass - OMC 050984
- Lynda Wade - pass OMC 050983

Radio Operators Needed

The new computer in the radio room has been installed and is working well. It is much faster than the old one and has the latest operating system which should see it last several years before becoming obsolete.

We need more people who are prepared to help with one half day per months to keep the radio rescue service up and running.

We know that there are people out there who are members with the required abilities and qualifications who could help and we ask you to phone Dave on 0413 910 246.

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The next class moves up to the start.



Janet and Fin keep a close eye on the field from VMR1.

Airlie Beach Race Week a Big Success

This was a big success this year with more than usual boats taking part in the events. The crews also did their bit for the local economy which was a much needed boost.

VMR helped make the event a success by being on the water for all the races.

We had only one 'casualty' when *Treasure* lost its steering and had to be towed back to base.

Apart from the actual safety aspects of our taking part it was just excellent PR as the chit chat both ways between VMR and race crews showed.

Learning English with VMR



Recently the English Language School contacted VMR to see if some of their students could look over VMR and see something of what we do. Their objective was to improve their English by getting closer to different elements of the Australian culture.

On the day appointed, the above students came down to VMR and spent about an hour looking all over the boat and learning what it could do. They were also very interested to learn about the concept of VMR and the safety of life at sea.

They enjoyed themselves and some had some very good questions written down in advance to ask and showed a real and keen interest in what VMR does.

It was a pleasure to have them and a good way to spread the SOLAS message. I hope their English improved as well.

A few days after they had been, a very nice thank you note arrived at VMR.

VMR Members Honoured



Recently the Whitsunday lions Club held its 40th anniversary celebration and as a part of that event it carried out its first awards night recognising local people who have made outstanding contributions to our community.

Nine persons received the Melvin Jones Award which is the highest award that a Lions club can bestow.

Each awardee received the Melvin Jones shield and a dinner voucher to be used by them and their partner at Ship-wrecked. As well, each awardee was able to nominate a charity to which the Lions club would donate \$400 in their name.

Two persons from VMR were amongst those honoured. They were David Morris and John Harper Snr who are shown above receiving their awards from Lions District Governor Barry Brockbank.

Their awards were based on their work for VMR and other of their community activities.

DG Barry noted that without people like these, just quietly doing what they do in the community, so many of the activities that we just take for granted, would not happen.



Search and Rescue Course

A small group of members have just completed a course in search and rescue at the base. The photo shows them working hard on the assessment. These persons will now be scheduled for practical boat training on SAR.



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THAT'S SOME TRICK ...

A magician was working on a cruise ship in the Caribbean. The audience would be different each week, so the magician allowed himself to do the same tricks over and over again. There was only one problem: The captain's parrot saw the shows each week and began to understand how the magician did every trick. Once he understood he started shooting in the middle of the show: "Look, it's not the same hat." "Look, he is hiding the flowers under the table." "Hey, why are all the cards the Ace of Spades?" The magician was furious but couldn't do anything; it was, after all, the captain's parrot. One day the ship had an accident and sank. The magician found himself adrift on a piece of wood in the middle of the ocean with the parrot, of course. They stared at each other with hate, but did not utter a word. This went on for a day, then another, and another. After a while the parrot said: "Okay, I give up. What'd you do with the ship?"



VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE

ASSOCIATION OF QUEENSLAND INC.

CODE OF CONDUCT.

V.M.R.A.Q. Personnel will maintain the highest standards of conduct in serving the Queensland community. In particular, V.M.R.A.Q. Personnel will always strive to maintain these five principles required of all members of Volunteer Emergency Services

V.M.R.A.Q. Members Will:

- 1. RESPECT THE LAW AND THE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT.**
- 2. RESPECT OTHER PEOPLE.**
- 3. BE DILIGENT.**
- 4. ALWAYS ACT WITH INTEGRITY.**
- 5. MAKE DECISIONS AND UTILISE RESOURCES WITH DUE REGARD FOR ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY.**

For more information on the 5 principles, please refer to the Code of Conduct & Anti Discrimination Manuals held by your Management Committee.

Date of Issue 01.09.96



CHANGES

to Queensland Boating Rules

by PETER HOLLIDAY



In late July 2011, the Transport Minister announced some changes to boating rules for Queensland. These changes come as a response to marine incidents, as Maritime Safety Queensland works to keep our waterways safe.

The detailed report, along with some Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) can be found at www.msq.qld.gov.au/Aboutus/MSQ-headlines/Boating-safety-improvements.aspx but some of them are summarised here.

Because more Queenslanders have driving larger boats, an advanced licence is being introduced for people wishing to drive recreational vessels over 12m (40ft) in length. This licence, the ARMDLE, will be introduced from January 1, 2013. To get the ARMDLE, you will need to gain practical experience, do a theory course, be over 18 and hold a normal boat licence for at least 12 months. Those of us who already hold a RMDL (boat licence) will not be required to get an ARMDLE.

Some ocean bars have been reclassified.



Gold Coast Seaway.

For quite some time it has been compulsory for everyone in open boats under 4.8m in length to wear a lifejacket when crossing bars. Some waterways have not been classed as bars, though. *Of particular importance to us is the Gold Coast Seaway. It was not classed as an ocean bar, but it will now be classified as a bar from January 1, 2012. From then on it will be compulsory to wear a lifejacket when crossing it in open boats under 4.8m.* Several other bars are also being reclassified.

This is a welcome change as far as I am concerned. Ocean bars are dangerous, and lifejackets really should be worn when crossing them.

Some changes regarding safety gear will come into effect from January 1, 2012 too. From 2009, we have required a 406MHz EPIRB when operating more than two nautical miles offshore. These should be registered so that AMSA (The Australian Maritime Safety Authority) will know as much as possible about your boat in case of an emergency. Until now this registration has been recommended, but not compulsory. From January 2012 it will be compulsory, and you will need to attach the registration sticker to your EPIRB.

As a Boatsafe trainer I have always recommended to boat licence candidates that safety gear should be in an easily accessed, clearly marked location. This will be compulsory from January 1, 2012. Too often people stow their safety gear deep in the cabin where it cannot be accessed in an emergency. Your safety can depend on getting to your safety gear quickly, so this is another welcome improvement.

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www.msq.qld.gov.au/Aboutus/MSQ-headlines/Boating-safety-improvements.aspx

Several changes are being made concerning Personal Water Craft (PWCs, jetskis etc.)

Jetskis have been exempt from carrying flares and a V-sheet when operating beyond smooth waters. This has mainly been because the early 'stand-up' jetskis didn't have much storage space. Modern sit down PWC's have lots of storage space, so from January PWC's will need to carry flares and a V-sheet when beyond smooth waters. Stand-ups will still be exempt, but they will be required to stay within half a nautical mile of the shore.

You require a PWC licence to operate a PWC, but you have always been able to ride one if you have a licenced operator on board who can take immediate control. I have always recommended that the licenced operator should wear the lanyard that operates the 'kill-switch'. That way they can shut the ski down if necessary. From January 1, 2012 this will be compulsory. When an unlicensed rider is driving, the licences rider on board **MUST** wear the lanyard.

As well as this, if an unlicensed rider is driving, then they cannot have another unlicensed person on board.

The biggest change, and the one that will cause most comment and complaint, is concerned with how close a PWC can come to other boats.

They have always had to either slow to six knots or stay at least 60m from almost everything – anchored vessels, the shore, pontoons, people in the water, bridges, boat ramps etc. Now there will be an extra condition.

If a PWC is within 30m of a movig vessel – including other PWC's – it will need to slow down to 10kts.

Many people will say that this is a bit harsh, and that it will take a lot of the fun out of driving a PWC, but when you consider all the accidents caused by jetskis riding close together, or too close to other boats, or too closely behind other boats you may see what an important step forward this is regarding safety.

Several other changes will come into effect as well, but these are the ones which will have the most effect on the average boat. I recommend that everyone should have a good look at the changes as described on the MSQ website.



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Date of Issue 01.09.96



S/SGT LUCAS YOUNG
OIC Gold Coast Water Police



Most boaties with outboard motors know to tilt the motor up out of the water to stop corrosion and sea life growing on the leg, prop etc.

Last year I wrote in V Sheet about the necessity to maintain and care for your boat. Most boaties with outboard motors know to tilt the motor up out of the water to stop corrosion and sea life growing on the leg, prop etc. Whilst travelling through Italy earlier in the year, I took the photo below which I think epitomises the point I was trying to make. A little bit of attention goes a long way towards reducing big repairs or expensive maintenance costs and safer boating for you.

Over the recent school holidays we have a slight rise in the number of thefts from boats. Items include outboard motors, electronic navigation equipment, stereos as well as fishing gear and alcohol. Unfortunately most boats lack the security of a motor vehicle so they become an easy target for would be thieves.

It is not only vessels moored in canals or on the river that are targeted. Boats in driveways or stored in yards of houses have had items stolen from them. The best way to look after your hard earned gear is make it as hard as possible for someone to take it. Remember most stolen items are taken by opportunist thieves. In other words, if it is easy and quick to take, they will steal it.

Get to Know Your Neighbours

Keep an eye on each other's boats. Notify the police of anyone acting suspiciously in or around your boats.

The most important thing to do is keep a record of your equipment. Create a file on your computer, photograph each item and record this with the make, model and Old serial numbers as well as any other markings. This will assist us in trying to recover the item if it is stolen. It also assists you when making claims through your insurance company.

A little bit of attention goes a long way towards reducing big repairs or expensive maintenance costs.

Here are some easy ways to deter thieves and lessen the possibility of someone stealing your possessions from your boats:

- Chain or lock your outboard motor to your boat if you can't remove it
- Remove electronics from your boat when they are not in use or stow them securely out of sight
- Remove fishing gear and stow securely in your house or garage
- Stow alcohol out of sight.

Winter has given us some magnificent boating conditions. Offshore boating numbers have increased as a result with boaties taking advantage of this to go whale watching, fishing or just enjoying a day out on their boats.

Boating offshore has its own set of safety requirements which include in-date flares and an EPIRB as well as other safety equipment. If you are travelling offshore check the expiry date on your flares and EPIRB. It is also a requirement for all EPIRB's to be registered with the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA). Failure to do so could result in a \$200 penalty. Water Police have noticed an increase in offences offshore relating to safety equipment. Safety equipment laws are in place to increase your safety on the water. Attention to detail and vigilance could save your life or those aboard your boat.

Safe boating and I'll see you out there.





After five years Peter Cartwright steps down as President

by JOHN STANFIELD

After five years at the helm of Volunteer Marine Rescue Southport it is time to reflect on the achievements of Past President Peter Cartwright.

After 30 years working in Papua New Guinea, Peter Cartwright moved to the Gold Coast in 1997 to enjoy retirement. In need of something to do, Peter was encouraged to join Volunteer Marine Rescue Southport and, as a boating enthusiast for many years in the islands and a past commodore of the Royal Papua Yacht Club, his involvement with VMR was a natural progression.

Peter's career in VMR has been interesting and challenging and began in 2001. Peter said, "I became a radio operator as I didn't want to have to go swimming in the Broadwater to be accepted as a boat crew member."

His achievements in radio operations and squadron administration are well cataloged. The positions he has held include senior radio operator, committee member for two years on the squadron's management committee, followed by one year as vice president and five years as president. Peter is the longest continuous serving president in the history of the squadron.

In those five years as president, Peter is proud of his achievements including the establishment of a controlled and strong financial base which, in the current climate, is no mean feat. Whilst fundraising is a never-ending problem and available community funding is shrinking, the squadron has managed to remain afloat and the future remains bright. Organisation and administration procedures have been upgraded and streamlined and a more professional approach has been applied to boat and base maintenance programmes. Active members



Peter L Cartwright - Past President.

have gained the benefit of improved insurance cover and increased base facilities for crew members which were completed on time and on budget.

Peter also takes a keen interest in the operation of the Seaway Tower. As well as continuing normal radio operator duties at the tower, he was involved in the establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding between Volunteer Coast Guard and Maritime Safety Queensland. No in-depth formal agreement on Tower operations and maintenance existed during prior years. Tower personnel are also involved in the progressive introduction of a computerised offshore tracking system which will be more effective for vessels travelling up and down the east coast of Australia.

In addition to his other duties, Peter has represented VMR Southport at the regular VMRAQ Southern zone meetings for the past five years. This is the Squadron's pipeline to state-wide management of Volunteer Marine Rescue Queensland.

After five years at the helm, Peter is looking onward to resuming more of a normal lifestyle and enjoying some of the privileges of being a regular senior radio operator once again.



Challenge create a fulfilling career for retiring Director-General

by PETER CALLAGHAN

School teacher, principal, industrial relations manager, human resources director, Director-General at the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, and finally at DCS ...

It's a rich mix and one thing is certain: retiring DCS Director-General Jim McGowan has covered a lot of ground in more than 30 years of serving the Queensland community.

While he admitted that his career has followed an often unpredictable trajectory, Mr McGowan said a willingness to accept new opportunities has been a driving force throughout his working life.

"When I left school and went to university, I had no expectation of anything other than being a schoolteacher," he said.

"How did all this happen? I guess I ponder that myself sometimes.

"In broad terms some of it is due to being in the right place at the right time. And some of it comes from accepting challenges that lead to other opportunities or not knocking back the opportunity to do different things."

"Being a director-general was never part of my career ambitions. Your career starts off in terms of what you see – for me, it was important to be a good teacher.

"What you learn by going from one organisation to another is that many of the skills you develop are readily transferable to new roles.

"Sometimes you have to learn the content of the new role, but I think people often are a bit too conservative in their career aspirations.

"They don't put themselves into unfamiliar situations or riskier circumstances on a personal basis, but I think that is part of growth and challenge which I have enjoyed.

"In the end, you take challenges and build on those challenges to build your career," he said.

Some of Mr McGowan's biggest challenges have come during his four-year tenure at DCS, which began when he was asked by the Premier to lead the then Department of Emergency Services through the QAS Audit process in 2007.

"I think we achieved what we set out to do with the ambulance audit. I think that QAS has improved as an organisation and it is more prepared to admit when it makes mistakes than it was before the audit.

"Certainly the performance of the QAS in terms of other measures has improved markedly."

More recently, Mr McGowan has overseen the machinery of Government changes in 2009 which merged DES and QCS to create DCS, and steered the department through the past summer's horrific sequence of natural disasters.

"The floods and the cyclones last summer brought an extraordinary response from the whole of this organisation beyond what was reasonable to expect," he said.

"It was a very tiring time, but it certainly gave me a great sense of pride that our people simply did what they had to do to meet extraordinary circumstances.

"In those situations, if the boss panics, then everyone in the organisation has got a reason to worry. I think there is an obligation on leaders to try to motivate people and support them through difficult circumstances.

"Much of it is about relationships, and making sure people feel they are contributing. We work with a host of government agencies and all these people were here and doing unbelievable difficult work without complain," he said.





"It's pretty easy to stay focused – you don't want to let anyone down."

Focus has been a key component in Mr McGowan's public service career. It has helped him take on fresh challenges as they arise, and maintain clear leadership in times of change.

"When I came to emergency services I new there were ambulances and fire trucks, but I didn't have much more knowledge than that.

"I have been lucky here at DCS. The commissioners and heads of EMQ I have worked with have been particularly dedicated to their work.

"They know about the ambulance service, the fire service and corrections. My philosophy has been to not interfere in the operational aspects of their business, and I think they have welcomed this approach," he said.

"I have had a broader role in managing the organisation and delivering on our wider objectives, in setting the direction for the department and engaging in whole-of-government matters.

"I'm pretty direct. People know where they stand, and I don't dwell or procrastinate over decisions that have to be made.

"I think that's often appreciated by the people you work with. They might not like the decision, but at least they understand the direction and that the decision has been taken.

"Hopefully, I have also been able to model the sorts of behaviours that I expect of others."

Mr McGowan said mentors and role models are very important for staff at all levels, as they can help set future directions and provide valuable advice and support – even if that means telling someone they have done the wrong thing.

"Throughout my career there have been people I have looked up to and who have provided me with the necessary prompts.

"From Peter Macdonald, the principal in my first teaching role at Chinchilla High School, to the directors-general I have worked with – all have helped me in my career development.

"One of the most important things for people, particularly if they are intending to move into leadership roles, is to have people who you look up to and who can provide you with support," he said.

"I've certainly mentored a range of people through my career, and I hope I am seen as a role model by other people with whom I have worked closely."

For Mr McGowan, the challenge now is to take on the next phase of his life, whatever that may hold.

"When you get to these senior positions, you don't often get a chance to shape your own departure. So I am pleased to be able to make the call," he said.

"It's time for me. I have been here for a bit over four years and I have never held any job for longer than four years in my whole career.

"In the cycle of leadership, when you come to an organisation you come with fresh ideas, so the first couple of years are exciting because you're looking to reshape areas.

Then there's a period of consolidation that you need to manage, and then people need to think about whether someone coming in with a different set of eyes, with new agendas, will provide a new period of growth for the organisation.

"Organisations benefit from an appropriate changeover of leaders, and individuals benefit from looking around at what else is available for them, whether that is family-related matters or other interests or a different type of work.

"I don't intend to just go home, put my feet up and watch the world go by. My wife Kaye and I will travel next year and I'll look for other opportunities that may be out there."

A renowned Brisbane Broncos rugby league fan and former school premiership-winning coach, Mr McGowan said there are many parallels between guiding a football team and leading a department such as DCS.

"I like to reassure people that what they do is really important. We live in a cynical age, an age where it's easy to be critical, but the work that people do in public service generally is noble work and they ought to be proud of it.

"That's not to say we can't improve, because we can, and that's not to say that we can be complacent because you've got to keep striving for better and better performance.

"That's what the community expects, that's what they pay their tax dollars for and that's our obligation.

"It's a pretty noble goal, the title of this department; community safety.

"If you can't sign on as a person to a concept of community safety then I'm not sure what would inspire or motivate you," he said.

"There are people who are negative in all organisations, but overwhelmingly my experience here at DCS is that people are proud of what they do. And that has made my job easier."

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